

The Islands in the Salish Sea Community Mapping Project

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This poster session will feature a visual displays of 30 incredible artistic community maps, rendered by the local island communities in the Canadian side of the Salish Sea.

This project began in 1999 on the eve of the Millennium, with the purpose to record and map what is valued, vulnerable and important to the local communities living on these islands. The communities went through extensive community gathering processes including inventories and workshops to gather information. This was then rendered by local artists. There are an additional six regional maps in the collection including one from the Was Nec (Saanich) Nation, Endangered Ecosystems, Economic, Energy and Transportation, Protected Sites, and The Marine Map. The collection was exhibited on 14 of the 17 island communities, in Victoria, Vancouver, and Sidney (at the GSX Hearings).

The Atlas of the Islands in the Salish Sea is now in production, due to be released in September, 2005. The collection of these beautifully rendered and significant Artistic Community Maps will be displayed in the centre of the book. Introductory sections will outline the power and nature of bioregional and artistic community mapping and the nature of the change in the islands' way of life since the last millennium. The maps will be featured with accompanying pages including legends, additional graphics, and the story of the maps. Following will be chapters describing the community process that these islands went through to arrive at these artistic "metaphors" of the islands, and descriptions of the artistic demands, techniques and tools which can be followed in other communities. A final chapter will explore sustainability concerns and issues for the islands' as a region and for the many people who call them Home. The project and Atlas is designed to offer both an example for other communities in transition and as a remarkable portrait of the necessary information, methods and processes that can support sustainability in this specific region of Canada. We believe that the book will become a powerful resource for these communities over time, and for other communities, such as its sold out and revised predecessor – Giving The Land a Voice, Mapping Our Home Places.